

THUMBS CONFESS THE MAN.

AND MANY A GUILTY
ONE HAS BEEN
BETRAYED BY THAT
MEMBER



—will, logic, and love.

The first or nail phalange signifies will; the second, logic; the third, which is the boundary of the Mount of Venus, love. When the thumb is unequally developed, and the first phalange is extremely long, it is neither love nor logic that governs the individual, but merely sheer will. If the middle phalange be much longer than the first, reason predominates, yet the many may not have the power to will himself to do that which his reason dictates. When the third phalange is long and the thumb is short man is revealed as the slave of the senses, guided neither by will nor reason.

If the thumb be supple jointed, the individual is easy going, spendthrift, careless of time, money, energy, opportunity, and all things. If it be firm jointed he is cautious, watchful, keen, diplomatic, tireless, in planning, confident, and sure of success, self-poised and self-controlling.

Sourvaroff, celebrated for the strength of his will; Danton, who took upon himself the disgrace of a crime for his country; Galileo, Socrates, Newton, Leibnitz, St. Simon, Fourier, Owen—those profound reasoners, those bold innovators—had infallibly very small thumbs. Voltaire, the man of the world, whose heart was subject to his brain, had enormous thumbs.

The intimate psychic connection between the mind and the thumb, revealed by science in a thousand phases, makes it folly to deny that the thumb is the thermometer of character and the barometer of mental health.

Specialists in nerve disease, by an examination of the thumb, can tell if the patient is affected or likely to be affected by paralysis, as the thumb signals this trouble long before it is visible in any other part of the body. If the danger symptoms are evidenced there an operation is performed on what is known as the "thumb center" of the brain, and the disorder is often removed. The success of the operation can be told, too, by the changed condition of the thumb.

No matter how carefully the individual may attempt to conceal incipient insanity the thumb will reveal it infallibly. It is the one sure test. If the patient in his daily work permits the thumb to stand at a right angle to the other fingers or to fall listlessly into the palm, taking no part in his writing, his handling of things, his multifarious duties, not articulating with the others, but standing isolated and sulky, it is an unanswerable confession of mental disease.

Born idiots come into the world without thumbs, or with them powerless and inert. Until they arrive at a time when a ray of intellect comes to their aid, they constantly keep their hands with the fingers above the thumb; the mind develops with the body; the thumb in its turn shuts over the fingers.

The epileptics in their fits shut the thumb before the fingers, which signifies that that malady, which is experienced before being felt, reaches the principle by which we think before that by which we feel.

Thumbs of the Dying.

At the approach of death, the thumb of the dying, as taken with some vague fear, takes refuge under the finger, which announces the near end. Man alone, because he has a thumb—that is to say, reason—knows death.

"The thumb," says D'Arpentigny, "individualizes the hand." On the back or cushion-like surface of the two joints of the thumb, as indeed on the other fingers, there is seen a kind of spiral formed by fine grooves in the skin. These are alike in no two individuals. Nature never duplicates these markings. Examining even a thousand million thumbs would show them all to be distinct and different. Individualized by some infinitesimal variation, these markings never change from birth to death, and the right thumb differs from the left.

The Chinese do not take photographs of their criminals. They merely force them to press their thumbs on a piece of white paper covered with aniline dye. India ink or similar substance. The resultant impressions are stored away, classified and brought out years after, if necessary, to identify a suspected person with one who has already received his diploma for crime. In many parts of the empire thumb marks are used on passports, for they

cannot be counterfeited or their passport used by any one but the right-full owner.

Big Thief Caught.

A few years ago, in course of transit between New York and New Orleans an express packet of paper money had been opened and \$22,500 of the original amount had been abstracted. Two of the seals had been broken and one had been resealed by thumb pressure. The solution of the mystery baffled the most ingenious work of the best detectives until, in despair, the matter was referred to an expert in handwriting and other methods of identification. Noting the faint impression of the thumb on the middle seal, he obtained wax impressions of the thumb of all the officials of the particular express companies through whose hands the packet was known to have passed. These impressions were photographed and enlarged and one of them clearly agreed with the thumb impression seal of the broken envelope. The thumb mark of one of the most trusted officials of the company thus betrayed him, and he was promptly arrested, tried, convicted, and sentenced.

So the thumb will speak when the tongue remains silent.

A true and interesting incident of where the thumb was the most prominent and truthful is told by a New York photographer.

This man had hung in his showcase the sign, one morning,

MALE HELP WANTED

On the following day a tall man, very genteel looking, appeared and said he was ready for work. He was asked his age, ability, and willingness to work. He was accepted, furnished his day's work, and given instructions to go ahead. The photographer, however, had noticed his new employee had very flat thumbs and seemingly very firm.

Counterfeiters Caught.

In a drawer stored away was a description of just such a pair of hands, handed him by a prominent detective, and with it an assurance of a \$500 reward for anyone giving information for game. In a friendly and off-hand way he photographed the man's hands, and sent copies to the detective who gave him the description.

Nothing was heard for a week or more, when one day the detective and two other officers entered and very gently asked if so-and-so worked there, and could he be seen. "Good morning, Mr. G—, are you Mr. G—? You are wanted in Philadelphia as the leader of the gang who manufactured the famous Monroe \$100 bill." Mr. G— was tried and sentenced, and with him forty-eight more persons, all of whom were led by the thumb or thumbs of this notorious crook.

The "Monroe hundred" was a \$100 silver certificate with the face of President Monroe stamped upon it. It was of a series of 1881, and an absolutely perfect counterfeit. Experts in the Treasury Department were fooled by it. The notes became so numerous and were accepted so extensively that the Government called in its entire issue of the bill, amounting to several million dollars. Even now a "Monroe hundred" is occasionally picked up, and it is almost impossible to tell whether it is genuine or not.

The only difference between the genuine bill and the counterfeit was in the shape of the figure 3 and 4 and the length of the bill. In the figure 3 the lower loop did not extend up so far toward the center of the figure as it should have extended. In the figure 4 the space between the base and the center cross line was narrower than it was in the genuine.

Long Terms in Prison.

The gang which made the "Monroe hundred" was arrested in Philadelphia in 1889. The plates which printed the bills were recovered and the counterfeiters sentenced to long terms in prison.

Another very interesting story that can be relied upon, it coming from one of Washington's leading dentists. Upon a small shelf in this dentist's office was many pieces of gold and several good gold teeth, and beside them on a clean white tray was a fresh plaster paris impression of a patient who was to have a new set of teeth. This impression being yet fresh was just the thing for the impression of either hand or thumb.

In the absence of the dentist, who had stepped across the hall, a young colored soldier had wandered in looking for just what he found. With the

gold and the teeth, the impression cast also went, he keeping it for a keepsake. About a year afterward the dentist received a hurried call one afternoon to extract a few teeth for an old colored woman.

The dentist made a quick response, and upon entering the room, the first thing that his eyes rested on was the plaster paris impression.

Thumb Prints Caught Him.

A search of many months and still the boy or man was not to be found. One day the dentist and several young students were talking the incident over, when one discovered the thumb imprint on the cast.

The story was related to the detective force and the cast given them with information of the trunk and boxes of other articles. It was only three days later when walking leisurely on their beats these officers were attracted by men putting in a window glass, and, stopping to examine the work, noticed the broad thumb print in the putty.

Upon investigation it was found to be the collector of all the trunk and boxes full of articles. He was cornered, arrested, and convicted, and has yet several years to serve.

One of the most thrilling cases ever brought to light and to justice was the act of a supposed minister of the gospel, who "worked" on innocent farmers. He would make his visits late in the evening and request shelter for the night and was always hospitably received. He proved a good talker. Just about retiring time a couple would drive up and ask the farmer where a minister could be found to marry them, and of course the minister got the job. The farmer was an interested spectator of the happy affair, and, at the conclusion of the solemn words that made the supposed clergymen man and wife, was benevolently delighted to sign his name, as a witness, to an elaborate marriage certificate, which the minister shined up from his little black bag as a present to the bride and groom. In the morning that signature appeared at a bank in the neighboring town, at the foot of a check for a large amount, and was cashed without question.

How It Was Worked.

The certificate of marriage was printed on heavy cardboard, and, whenever names or dates were to be written in, the cardboard was cut away with a beveled edge, and the writing was done on smooth paper pasted on the back of the certificate, and showing through the beveled holes. The effect was ornamental and nothing wrong about it could possibly be suspected. Between the two sheets of pasteboard, however, a bank check

had been inserted, so that its signature line came right under the opening left for one of the witnesses, and, in consequence, the farmer was actually signing a check on his own bank when he good naturedly "witnessed" the fake marriage.

Nothing was heard of the minister or the happy pair for nearly a year or rather until they had practiced this same method on several of the innocent farmers several times, and had collected a snug sum for each member of the party.

One day it was announced that two of the farmers would give \$20 to any police or detective turning over to the

How They Were Caught.

A night or so after he proposed that they play a new game, and see who had the queerest thumbs, he went to his room and produced a package of wax he had bought the same day, and all dipped fingers in just for the fun of it. He declared the first wax stuck to was the bad one, and should have last go, or turn. His next thought was to obtain the raised, drawn cheek. Sunrise, the next morning found him

pockets, he pulled several nails and dimes from it. Thinking the boy was rather spendthrift, the detective asked the lad where he got so many pennies and money. "Oh, dad's rich. He gets his money easy," was the answer.

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off for a tramp over the country to find the duped farmer. In due course if time he landed at the farmhouse, at first being very coldly received, the farmer having had enough experience with friendly callers.

After a half hour's talk the farmer was satisfied that his new visitor was in earnest, gave over the check.

The detective at once was satisfied that he had the right man, and started straight for town, where he had the finger prints enlarged, revealing, not only the would-be minister, but the happy pair, who were really man and wife, and had six little ones. The two men were tried and convicted. The would-be minister died in prison serving his term, and the other was a gray-haired man of sixty when released.

FAME OF OLYMPIAD FESTIVALS COME FROM A CHOSEN ERA

The immense fame of the Olympiad festivals comes largely from their having been chosen as giving an era, or a means of dating other events. The Romans had apparently a fixed tradition of the founding of their city; they could date historical occurrences by the year ab urbe condita. There was no fixed era for the Greeks. Some historians dated from the fall of Troy; but opinions varied within some six hundred years as to the time of that occurrence itself. There were divers other systems. Some dated by the archons at Athens, or by the priestesses in the temple of Hera at Argos. But, apart from other objections, neither system was international, and both implied that the reader must know his list of archons or priestesses by heart. The archons were more satisfactory than the priestesses, because they had, at least, a fixed term of office. A priestess might hold office for one year or for thirty. But, obviously the great four-yearly festivals formed a better basis for dates than either, and among such festivals the Olympian were probably the best. True, the Pythian games at Delphi were fully as famous and inspired far more religious feeling. But the temple at Delphi was too much exposed to disturbance and pillage. Olympia lay quiet, out of the main track of war and political trouble. And Olympia professed, truly or falsely, to have a record of all conquerors since the great reconstruction of the games in 776 B. C. The games themselves are just declining from their prime glory at the time when we hear most about them in the fifth century B. C.

Bodily prowess was still such an important quality in a man that, if any great athlete happens to play a part in history, the historians generally mention his victories in the games. But it was no longer an age in which Shaw, the life guardman, could seriously be regarded as a more admirable warrior than the Duke of Wellington. And in Pindar, the writer from whom we hear most praise of the games, there is a constant undercurrent of regret, irritation, almost bewilderment, that the world is no longer attaching proper importance to the great boxing and horse-

racing nobles, and to him their prophet, Pindar, an aristocrat himself, was the poet of Dorian aristocracy. He was the bard of those great houses which, in spite of their not infrequent occupation in trade, their occasional leading forth of an adventurous colony, remained for the most part grumbling and half forgotten, while the main stream of Hellenic life swept past them. They were men of courage and muscle; great hunters, runners, boxers; if need came, great warriors, though only in the manner of their ancestral tradition, with none of your modern book learning or siege tactics. Their object was to be "good men," and they meant by "goodness" what their grandfathers had meant. If they were outstripped in the race of life, it was their great ancestor Ajax had been beaten by the unworthy Odysseus. Pindar added another quality to the "goodness," or Arete, which he required of his patrons; they must "spend" their money and strength and effort freely for the attaining and maintaining of their Arete. It was a great ideal in its day, and Pindar conceives of it greatly. The misfortune is that in the fifth century it has ceased to correspond to outward facts. The time which created it was the period after the great race migrations, especially after the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnese. Mr. Louis Dyer has shown how the Olympian festival is derived from an ancient pre-Dorian gathering of a number of neighboring villages at a center which they called "Pylos;" a gathering of the ordinary four-yearly type, with common worship and sacrifice, open competitive games, and opportunities for settling by discussion and arbitration any intercommunal difficulties. A general truce was, of course, necessary for any such common meeting, and was enforced, as usual, by taboos and curses. Eventually the whole territory of Elis, in which the festival was held, was declared "sacred," or, in modern language, neutral, and any invasion of it forbidden.

After the Dorian conquest this festival became widened and glorified. The Peloponnese became full of conquering warriors out of work, athletes of war with no one left to make war on. The games had a much closer relation to

war than modern athletics have, and the idea of Arete, or "goodness," in a man or a warrior had become prominent and forceful in the Greek world. The conquerors of the Peloponnese liked the opportunity of practicing Arete and displaying it one against another. Only the nobles, as a rule, had leisure for such exercises. Besides, the peasant poet, never speaks of the games; neither is Pindar, though interested in tournaments. Nobles of other races joined in. The wealthy nobility of Sicily and Italy not only won horse races—they had more money to buy expensive horses—but actually distinguished themselves in personal prowess. The games served a great purpose. They gave a harmless and human outlet to the fighting spirit of many conquering tribes. They kept up the invaluable tradition of peaceful friendly meetings between neighbor states, of the security of the public roads, of the notion of a fixed international state of peace and decent conduct even in the midst of warring units. And they served intensely, almost too intensely, to keep up that desire for "goodness," judged by competitive standards, which is at the root of many of the best and worst qualities of ancient Greece. Like most conquering nations, the classical Greeks were "good sportsmen." On the whole, one can see that Pindar's men neither cheat nor accuse others of cheating, and mostly take a defeat like men. It is only boys who are said to jeer at a defeated competitor, and those, I suppose, were the boys who looked on, not the boys who competed.

The decline in the importance of the games came when the idea of "goodness" changed. Arete began to be identified, in part or whole, with Sophia. Goodness began to include "wisdom," or the qualities of the intellect, and the old purely athletic virtues inevitably paled. True, a strong element of "wisdom" in various forms found its way into the Olympian festival. Herodotus read his wonderful book aloud there. The great fifth century sophists lectured there. Poets recited their poems. Hippias illustrated how the "wise" man was self-sufficing, and should be the maker of his own

cloak, tunic, boots and signet ring, as well as the author of his own peace of mind. When Hippolytus wished to "stand high in the great games of Hellas," he was probably thinking more of "wisdom" than of pure athletics. But in reality "wisdom" had not much chance of cutting a good figure at these contests. Make the most sympathetic arrangements you will, a lecture by Huxley and a recitation by Tennyson would scarcely have "a fair show" at say, the Henley regatta or the Oxford and Cambridge sports, not to speak of Epsom. The spiritually active part of Greece devoted itself more and more to "wisdom," the mere pressure of the world worked, as usual, in the direction of success and money making; and Pindar's Dorian nobles were left to cultivate their splendid bodies and their expensive horses somewhat in a backwater of the national stream. True they had more influence on ordinary adult life than athletes now have. Euripides, though a good athlete himself, once or twice denounces their influence with an intensity which would not be too great in a modern public school.

Plato gently satirizes the fashionable young Athenians who showed their admiration of things Spartan by acquiring, at much inconvenience, broken noses and "prizefighter's ears." And it remains true, and a rather important truth, that in the comparatively simple conditions of ancient society a man's body was much more with him and more important to him than it is now. The toothless and short-sighted man had then no oculist and dentist to put him, as a matter of course, on an equality with his fellows. The flabby man was not hidden behind good tailoring; the obese man did not fly lightly on a motor car; he waddled and perspired. And correspondingly there certainly was the statues alone would prove it—a great deal of sincere admiration for an object which has now been so long and sedulously hidden from human eyes that it has whitened like a starved plant out of the sun, the healthy and well-developed human body. But in the main, though the courses of people at Olympia were probably greater in the fifth and fourth centuries than in the seventh and sixth, the inward meaning of the games was passing rapidly away at the very beginning of our classical period.